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Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

November 2020

Pearson Edexcel GCSE

In Persian (1PN0) Paper 4H: Writing in Persian

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Introduction

This year none of the candidates chose to answer paper 1PNO_4F, therefore this report relates to paper 1PNO_4H, which tests candidates' ability to write in Persian and translate from English into Persian.

The evidence from marking in this session indicates that the paper was effective in differentiating between candidates of different abilities and that all the questions worked as anticipated.

The published mark scheme provides extensive guidance with regard to the overarching approach to marking. The mark scheme has been trialed before and after exam in different stages and at the end with sample candidates answers to ensure candidates are rewarded properly. As the approach to marking is positive, examiners always seek to reward what candidates produce.

It is helpful for teachers to distinguish clearly between the assessment objectives stated in the specification.

There was varied evidence of how well candidates were prepared for this assessment, but there was little evidence of where candidates did not follow the instructions, for example answering both part a and b for question 1 and 2.

Question 1

This section has two parts and candidates can select one of them and write between 80-90 words about the topic. This year part A related to the theme of School, the subtheme: What school is like and the content was focused on School type. Part B related to the theme of Identity and culture, the subtheme: Cultural life and the content was focused on Music.

There was evidence that some candidates needed to pay more attention to use of different and correct tenses, also use of different types of sentences including compound and complex sentences.

Question 2

Like question 1, this section has two parts and candidates can select one of them and write between 130-150 words about the topic. This year part A related to the theme of Local area, holiday and travel, the subtheme: Holiday and the content was focused on Preferences. Part B related to the theme of School, the subtheme: School activities and the content was focused on School trips.

There was evidence that some candidates needed to pay more attention to use of different and correct tenses, also use of different types of sentences including compound and complex sentences.

Question 3

This year part A related to the theme of Local area, holiday and travel, the subtheme: travel and tourist transactions and the content was focused on asking for help.

As previously mentioned, not every acceptable or rejected answer is included in the mark scheme. Examiners will award a mark to a segment where the message is conveyed clearly, correctly and unambiguously in such a way that a native speaker of Persian with no knowledge of English would understand exactly the same message as would a native English speaker with no knowledge of Persian.

As part of the design of the passage for the assessment of translation into Persian, the passage is targeted at a different tense. It is normal and expected that candidates with different levels of Persian should find some parts more challenging than others.

There was evidence that some candidates needed to pay closer attention to the naturalness of the Persian phrasing that they used, to avoid ambiguity of message.

Advice to centres

1. Ensure that all candidates are familiar with the format of the paper and what they need to do in each section and question.
2. In question 1 and 2 make candidates aware that they need to write about all items mentioned in each section. It can help candidates if teachers ask candidates to write about each item separately and check the answers according to the instructions in mark scheme.
3. In question 1 and 2 make candidates aware that they need to use different types of sentences not only simple sentences.
4. In question 1 and 2 ensure candidates are equipped with a good range of vocabulary to be able to ensure that the written response is correct in terms of register and not overly colloquial in tone.
5. In question 1 and 2 give candidates practice in proof-reading their own work and that of others, looking to correct common errors and develop the habit of writing accurately.
6. In question 3, make candidates aware that a correct translation will not necessarily be a literal word-by-word translation. There will be differences in word order, clause structure or other linguistic features between the two languages. The resulting Persian passage should be natural, correct and unambiguous Persian.
7. In question 3, work with candidates using the mark scheme, to exemplify different approaches to translation. It can be useful in teaching v to translate into Persian to ask them to produce a 'mark scheme', rather than a translated passage; this can help to develop the ability to think laterally. It may also be helpful in steering them away from online translators if they are encouraged to think carefully about alternatives and how to avoid errors.

